

Montlake Community Center Expansion Project

Summary of Public Involvement

This provides a summary of the public involvement to design the expansion of the Montlake Community Center. This document:

- Recounts the steps and participants in the public process
- Summarizes the community concerns that were expressed, the basis for decisions, and an explanation of existing policies and plans
- Describes amendments or changes that resulted from the public process.

Background

In November 2000, Seattle voters approved a \$198.2 million levy lid lift for Parks and Recreation, including \$3 million to expand the Montlake Community Center. Inflation adjustments resulted in a final budget of \$3.4 million. The project description stated:

This project improves the existing 2,810 square foot Montlake Community Center by expanding activity areas as well as creating a multi-purpose room, showers, and office space. The new facilities may be designed to connect the existing gym to the existing “Tudor” structure, which serves as community meeting and recreation space.

Public Involvement Steps

There were many opportunities to be involved in the project. These included:

- Project Advisory Team (PAT) – Parks recruited a PAT to provide ongoing review and recommendations during the project.
- Community-wide Public Meetings and Workshops - Parks held three open meetings and workshops.
- Neighborhood Meetings – Staff attended Montlake Community Club and Montlake Community Center Advisory Council meetings to gather comments.
- Community Questionnaire – Staff also distribute and questionnaire seeking comments on priorities for the improvements.

Key Areas of Community Discussion

- Direction of the Expansion: Community members considered options that would either be more integrated with the existing Tudor building or more integrated with the gym building. Most favored not crowding the Tudor building and allowing it to be a separate “jewel.” The design creates additional space by adding to the gym building.
- Renovation of the Tudor Building: Nearly everyone wanted the Tudor to be enhanced and many wanted it to be slightly reconfigured to add a small kitchen and better bathrooms. When faced with limited budget, community members favored constructing new space and making small improvements to the Tudor.
- Spectator Space for the Gym: Many community members favored something that would provide an area for spectators that is not currently available. The design provides windows into the gym from adjacent common areas

- Retaining the “Temporary” Modular and Tudor Annex: Some community members wished to retain these structures as cost effective space for programs. The general community feeling and Park’s strong desire however was to eliminate these structures and build new space that met Parks standards.

Community Meeting #1: This first public workshop was held at the Montlake Elementary School Gym in October 2004. Community participants engaged in a discussion of site development options and priorities for expanding the facility.

- Like preserving and enhancing the Tudor
- Preferred adding on to the gym building
- Public space and/or lounge is important - maybe you can see into gym from the space
- Like the idea of building for 50 years, get rid of modular building
- Orient new multipurpose room to open space
- Connect new space to the children’s play area
- Entrance to the center is very important

City of Seattle Landmark Designation: Parks nominated the Tudor Building as a City Landmark. In January, 2005, the Landmark Preservation Board designated the Tudor exterior and the immediate landscaping as a City landmark.

Community Meeting #2: Parks held a second public meeting in November 2004. Community members commented on schematic options that added to the gym building. Main points raised during the meeting included:

- Activity spaces should be seen as flexible over the long term
- Public areas are key to allowing informal interaction among the patrons and enhancing the feeling of community
- Make the Tudor a “jewel” or centerpiece of the park
- It was explained that to avoid expenses for code upgrades that would limit the budget to new construction; the Tudor’s improvements needed to be primarily cosmetic
- Enhance the area between the Tudor and Gym to create an outdoor space/courtyard

Community Meeting #3: The third meeting focused on refining the design concept and considering options for addressing budget limitations:

- The addition on the west side of the gym was proposed to include:
 - An “activity room”
 - Family shower/bathroom accessible from the outside (converted from an existing restroom)
 - Multipurpose dividable room with a kitchen
 - Existing offices will be converted to a lounge space with bigger windows (added) for viewing the play area and outdoors
 - The focus for the existing gym is adding more seating and spectator access
 - Convert adjacent space to make a fitness space
- Capitalize on the water and shoreline nearby. Orient the addition toward the water.
- Try to “seamlessly” enhance the existing space by extending a roofline across, and covering the entryways to building

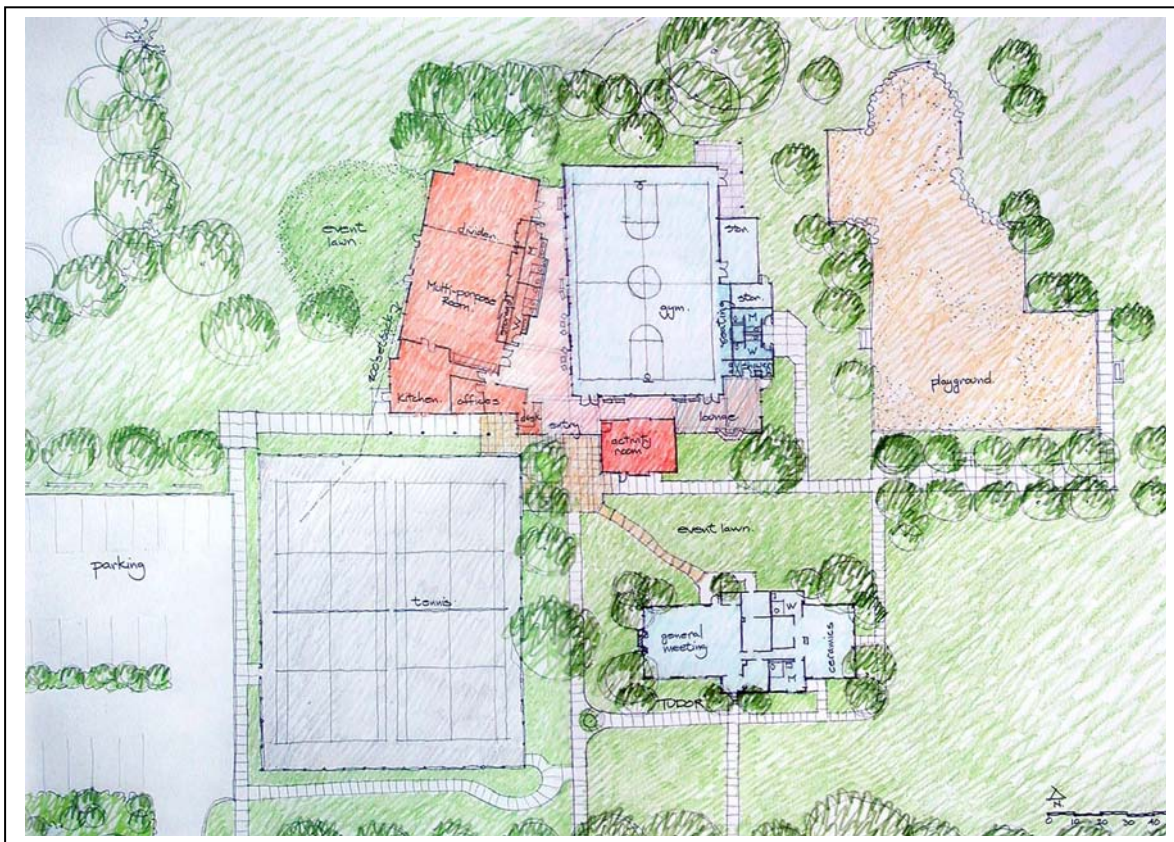
- Focusing resources on added spectator space (gym) vs. upgrading the Tudor building:
- Is it possible to add windows into gym from common areas to provide spectator seating inside that space?
- If any funding were available for the Tudor, the plan is to upgrade main room, and convert the staff office to create a small kitchenette that opened to the main room.
- Some people want the modular building retained and want the Tudor space renovation made a higher priority.

Project artist, Kristin Tollefson, talked about having spent time speaking with the Montlake community and with the project architects regarding this project. She reviewed two conceptual thoughts for the project:

- 1) Emphasizing a correlation between land and water: such as a vessel or basin, and
- 2) Discovery that the property used to be a large dahlia farm. She also showed the group a few small scale examples of her studio art.

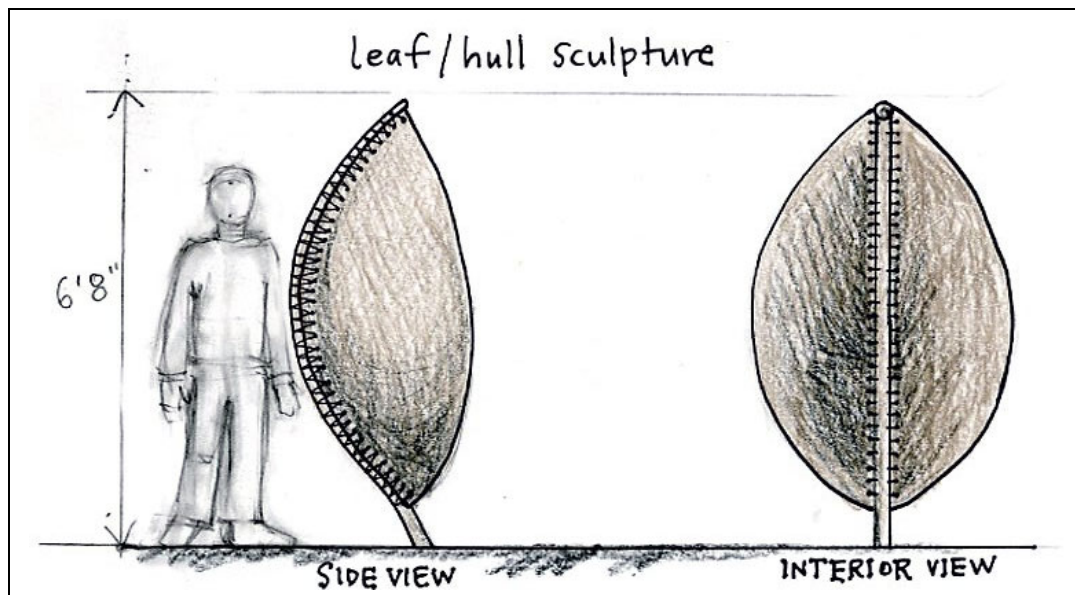
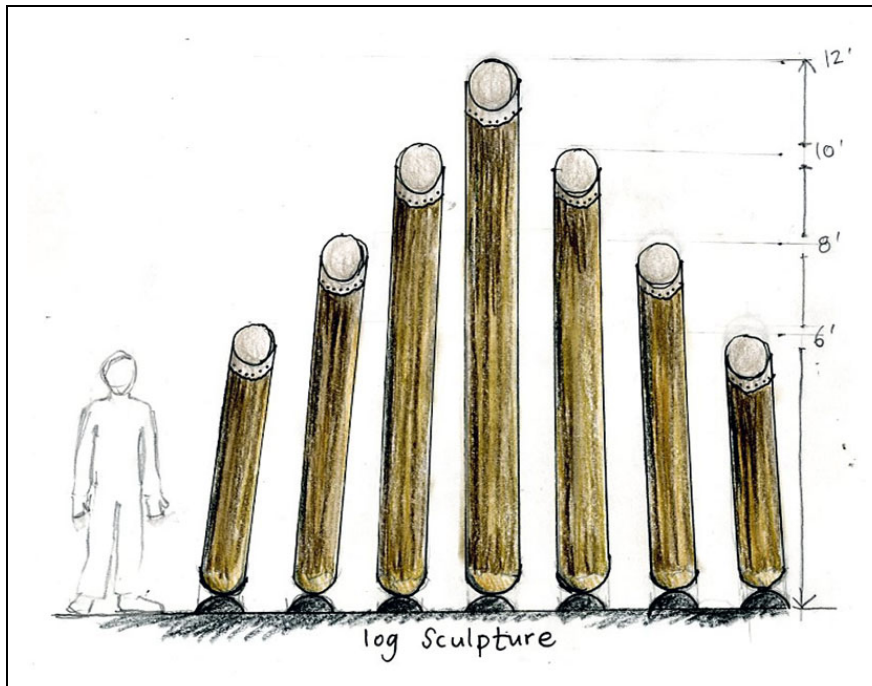
Final Design

Site Plan



Art Element

The entry artwork for the Montlake Community Center is inspired by the connection between water and land, which are so integral to the site. The sculpture pair will inhabit the plaza between the community center and the Tudor building. Tilted logs will suggest the bare rib form of a boat and represent countless logs that have traveled through the Montlake Cut. Facing the logs, the metal sculpture will be an abstraction of a leaf or hull, tying together the natural elements of land and water.



Construction Phase

Seattle Parks and Recreation advertised for construction bids in winter 2006. The low bidder, Roy E. Dunham Construction, started in April 2006.

As anticipated, soil conditions encountered at the site were poor, necessitating an auger-cast piling foundation as designed.

During Construction, Parks staff met with the Montlake Advisory Council to discuss the desired improvements to the Tudor building raised in the Community Meetings. Due to the rapid escalation in construction materials costs, the project budget could not accomplish all of the desired improvements to this building.

Special thanks go to the Montlake Community Center Advisory Council for donating \$42,000 in additional funding specifically designated to improve the Tudor, preserving its exterior and upgrading the interior finishes.

In spite of material cost increases and delays for the concrete drivers strike in the fall, this project remained on schedule and within budget.

Grand Opening Celebration

*Join us for the grand opening! **Friday, Jan. 5, 6 - 8 p.m.***

6:30 p.m.

In the new multipurpose room:

Ribbon cutting ceremony with Mayor Greg Nickels

St. Joseph's Catholic School Choir

Sheree Seretse's Marimba Ensemble

7 - 8:30 p.m.

In the new multipurpose room:

Sheree Seretse's Marimba Ensemble

Delicious hors d'oeuvres by culinary instructor Ken Anderson

In the gym:

RoRo The Clown

Toddler Play Area

Meet Your Instructors

Throughout the Center:

Performances by the Langston Hughes Performing Arts Center

In the Tudor Building:

Live jazz from Black Lab Duo

Cupcakes & hot chocolate

Roaring fire in the fireplace